

# THE SHOW FOLKS!

“ Walk up! Walk up!  
The players! the players! the players are here!”

BY PIERCE EGAN.

EMBELLISHED WITH  
NINE CHARACTERISTIC DESIGNS ON WOOD,

BY THE LATE  
MR. THEODORE LANE,  
AND ENGRAVED BY MR. JOHN THOMPSON.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,  
A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
OF  
THE LIFE OF MR. THEODORE LANE.

DEDICATED TO THE  
PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY,  
SIR MARTIN ARCHER SHEE, KNT.

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LONDON :  
PRINTED FOR M. ARNOLD, TAVISTOCK STREET,  
COVENT GARDEN ; AND  
SIMPKIN AND MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT.

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R 792.0941 EGA  
Egan, Pierce,  
The show folks!

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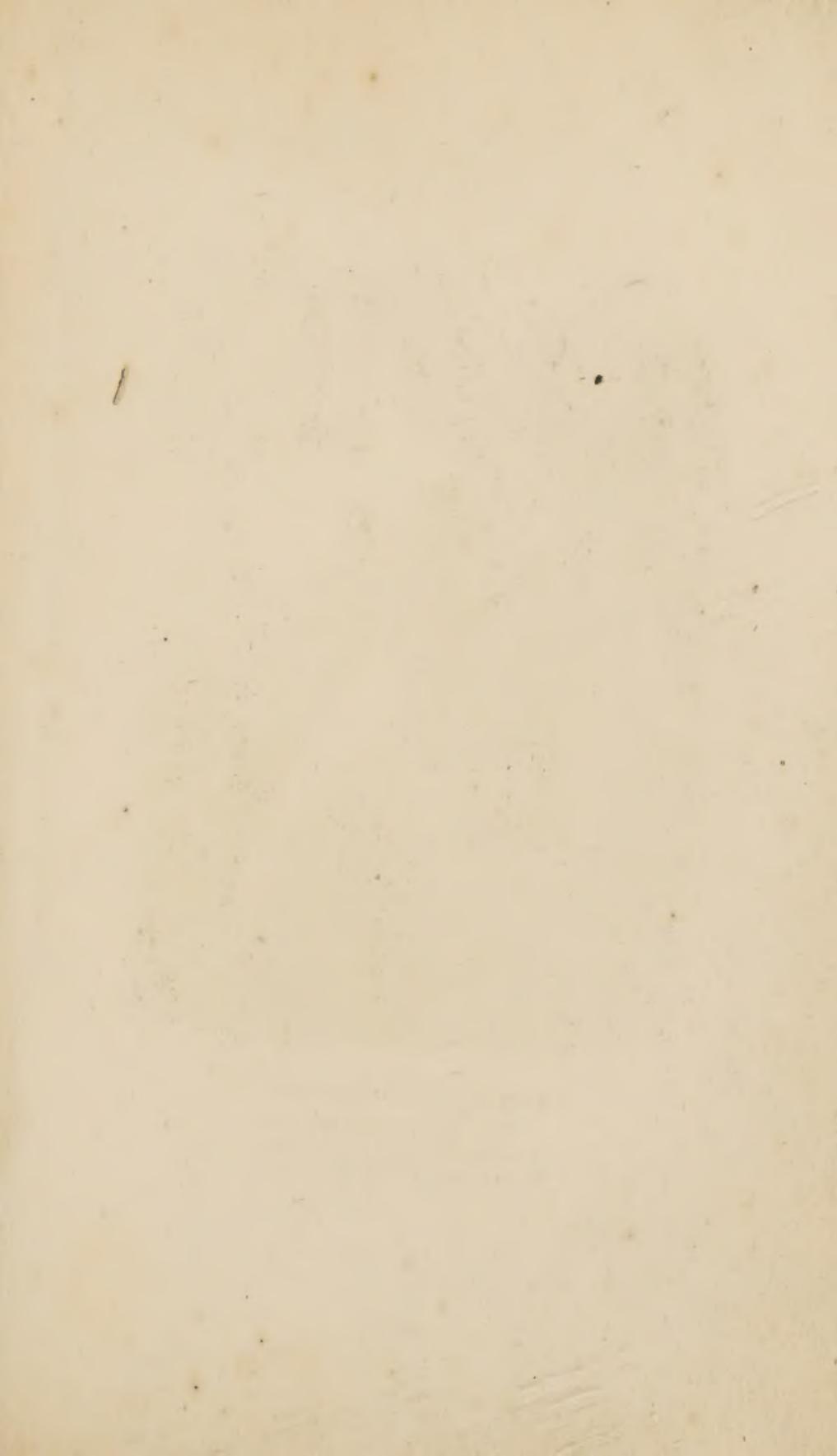




THE  
SHOW FOLKS.



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### THE STAGE-STRUCK HERO.

Lo ! I have a weapon :  
A better never did itself sustain  
Upon a soldier's thigh !

THE  
SHOW FOLKS!

---

“Valk up! Valk up!  
The players! the players! the players are here!”

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BY PIERCE EGAN,

AUTHOR OF “LIFE IN LONDON;” “WALKS THROUGH BATH;”  
“TRIP TO ASCOT RACES,” ETC.

Embellished with Nine Characteristic Designs on Wood,

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1831.

C. WHITTINGHAM, CHISWICK.

TO THE

PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY,  
SIR MARTIN ARCHER SHEE, KNT.

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SIR,

WITHOUT attempting any “*Broad Grins*” upon the subject, or even calling in the aid of the “*Wags of Windsor*,” yet laughing at the frowns of the great “*Blue Beard*,” on theatrical affairs, I have, “*John Bull*” like, although perfectly unknown to you, Sir, dedicated MY “*Random Records*” respecting a young artist of great promise, who, had his life been spared, would, in all probability, have become an ornament to that profession, of which, in the distinguished character of the PRESIDENT of the ROYAL ACADEMY, you have been selected as the HEAD.

Besides, Sir, the unity of three subjects, with which you are so intimately connected —PAINTING, POETRY, and the STAGE. With the first, perhaps, I had better “change the scene,” and *brush* off, preferring a good *exit*, rather than stammering out a *dull* part. With the second, if I can do no more, than express my admiration of it—

Possess'd beyond the Muse's painting!

and *act-ing* upon the third subject, under the shelter, “that one man in his time, *plays* many parts,” I may be allowed to take a peep at the SHOW FOLKS!

Yet anxious to avoid any thing like *daubing* connected with this Dedication—also to escape the remarks of being too *highly-coloured*—out of drawing—and deficient in *light* and *shade*—I shall refer to an event wherein I feel myself more competent to descant upon, in order to escape the dangers of being at sea without a rudder!

Then, Sir, as the independent author of **ALASCO**, for whose noble stand and remonstrance to the Lord Chamberlain, “ whether the British theatre shall, in future, afford an intellectual enjoyment worthy of a free people,” and for which spirited conduct, all dramatic writers must feel indebted to your exertions—I have done myself the honour of submitting the following sketch of the late **MR. THEODORE LANE**, in order to rescue his name and talents from total oblivion.

Permit me to say, Sir, it must have been a most grateful source of reflection to the author of “ *Alasco*,” that, “ however, the tenets of his tragic discourse were not held to be orthodox by the grand inquisitor of the Lord Chamberlain’s office !” and, officially, stigmatised as they were, upon that occasion ; yet such sort of *implied* censure, then represented as dangerous sentiments to the welfare of the state, must have lost its sting, on your being appointed Presi-

dent of the Royal Academy, by his late Majesty.

That the FINE ARTS may flourish to the end of time; that poetry and music may continue to increase in reputation, and give delight; and that the stage may always “hold the mirror up to nature, to show VIRTUE her own feature; *vice*, her own image; and the very age and body of the time, its form and pressure,” is the most sincere wish,

SIR,

Of your most obedient,

And very humble servant,

PIERCE EGAN.

LONDON, Dec. 1, 1830.





THE BENT OF GENIUS.

THE  
S H O W F O L K S.

---

The Painter dead, yet still he charms the eye,  
While England lives, his fame can never die ;  
But he who struts his hour upon the stage,  
Can scarce extend his FAME to HALF AN AGE ;  
Nor pen, nor pencil, can the Artist save,  
The ART and ARTIST *share* one common Grave !

---

I.

GREAT THESPIS<sup>1</sup>, Father of the Art,  
Renown'd in days of yore,  
Whose “*strut and fret*” were in a cart,  
Yet ne'er was deem'd a *bore*.

## II.

MELPOMENE, with tragic mind,  
The PASSIONS to display ;  
THALIA, with smiles so kind,  
“To drive dull care away !”

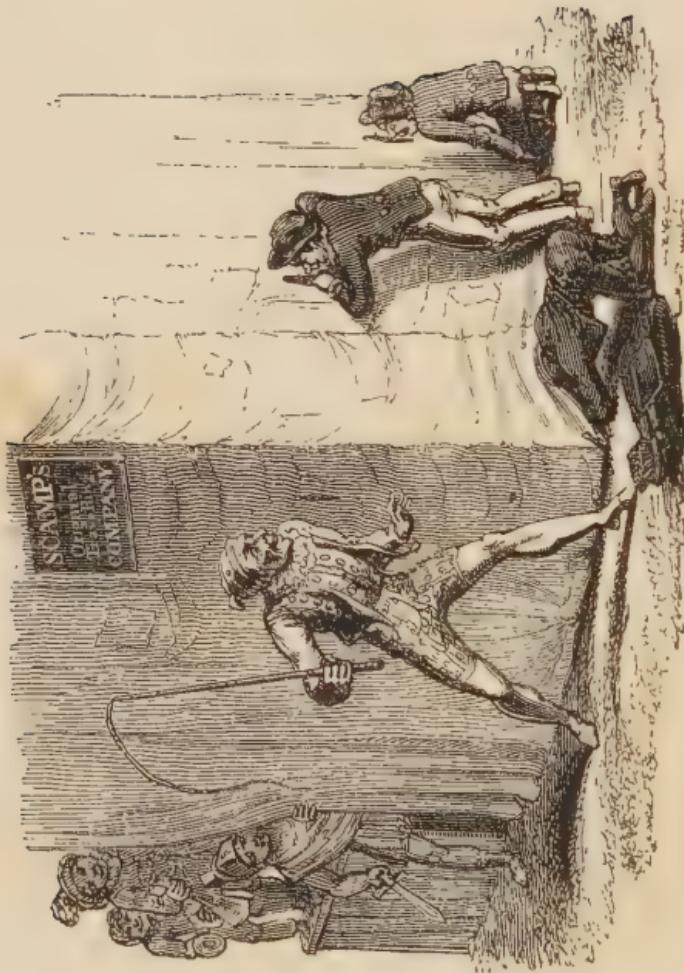
## III.

When ROSCIUS first essay’d in Rome,  
And through *his* acts did pass,  
Heaven’s proud Canopy—the Dome,  
Each Actor on his ass<sup>2</sup> !

## IV.

But modern times have changed the scene,  
Most interesting features—  
Actors and Actresses quite serene,  
What delightful creatures !





What are you arter? You must pay for peeping, my boys. I shan't charge  
you much for whipeord! Ha! ha!

## V.

And “ come and go ” without reproach,  
View talents great and rare,  
Instead of “ ass,” read splendid Coach,  
Which make the Vulgar stare !

## VI.

Still to the SHOW FOLKS much is due,  
For Nature, Art, and Fool !  
Study for Actors—sound and true :  
Preparatory School <sup>3</sup>.

## VII.

GUY BILLY was an only boy,  
His daddy, a Stock-broker ;  
BILLY—Mamma’s delight and joy,  
Because he was a *joker* <sup>4</sup> !

## VIII.

He quizz'd his Dad, and teased his Aunt,  
And laugh'd at his *dear* Mother;  
Yet all was right—got every grant,  
'Tis true—he had no Brother.

## IX.

The darling boy in life's great page,  
His hour resolved to strut,  
To shine a Hero on the stage  
In spite of *grin* or *butt*!

## X.

To thwart his **GENIUS**<sup>5</sup> might be wrong;  
Much more, pervert his taste,  
Mamma encourag'd dance and song—  
Other pursuits were waste!





THE MOVING CIRCUS.

Now, Mr. Merryman, tell the Ladies and Gentlemen the merits of our  
Troop. Behold the first Horseman in the World.

## XI.

Spouting at morning, noon, and night,  
With tongue like a mill-clack,  
A wretched bore—but his delight,  
His truncheon—the boot-jack.

## XII.

“A horse! a horse!” was all his cry,  
With—“off, off with his head!”  
In spite of Ma’s polite—“O fie!”  
The inmates kept in dread.

## XIII.

From Berwick Street—a great Hero!  
Elated in the cause,  
Proud as any noble Peer O!  
O’erwhelm’d with the applause<sup>6</sup>.

## XIV.

At length, determined for a start,  
Says BILL—“ I now, know Folks,  
I’m up in almost every part,  
’Twill *friz* with the SHOW FOLKS!”

## XV.

Then off he went, quite full of glee,  
Strutting towards the HARP,  
In hopes some Manager to see;  
Mixing with *Flat* and *Sharp*!

## XVI.

Then off again, no fear or dread,  
To the once famed O. P.  
In better taste—chang’d to KEAN’s Head—  
And noted for a *spree*<sup>7</sup>!

## XVII.

His mind was fix'd—the STAGE his choice,  
He would all hazards run—  
His tragic start, and uncouth voice,  
Were to the Agents—*fun*<sup>8</sup>!

## XVIII.

To those “Great Creatures,” in their way,  
GUY, boasted talents rare;  
Every *line*—BILL sought to play,  
Right—“at Bartlemy Fair!”

## XIX.

To Richardson's you'd better go,  
Variety's *his* stage<sup>9</sup>;  
Lots of Practice—charming show!  
You're sure to be engaged.

## XX.

Then off he started for “ the LANE<sup>10</sup>,”  
The Manager’s retreat—  
Many “ turn’d off”—put out of pain—  
*Finish of Judgment’s Seat!*

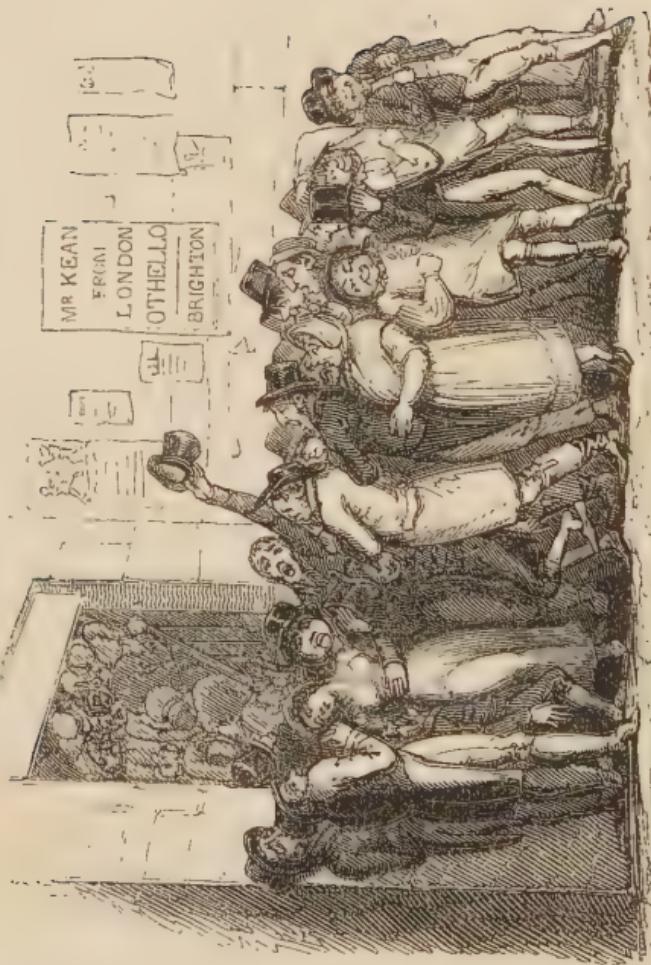
## XXI.

“ I caper, sing, or *act* a Ghost—  
Throw off a comic chant;  
Like PROTEUS, change at every post,  
To the ladies prove—ga-lant!”

## XXII.

“ Why, Muster, you’re the sort of man,”  
Said *Richardson* so knowing—  
“ As G—d’s my Judge, stick to my plan,  
And soon—I’ll set you going.”





GALLERY FOLKS.—Powerful attraction of talent. My eyes how you push!  
Don't behave like Brutes? Here's a female woman a fainting!

## XXIII.

Outside of show, on the parade,  
BIL GUY then took his stand,  
Hooting and bawling, like one in trade,  
To view the sight so grand.

## XXIV.

“Walk up! walk up! the Players here,  
Their Characters<sup>11</sup> inquire!  
Abilities known every where,  
You all must them admire!”

## XXV.

For months he toil’d both day and night,  
Like Cheese or Butter-factor;  
He felt the *fag*<sup>12</sup>—lost the *delight*—  
And *pleasure* of an Actor!

## XXVI.

From Fair to Fair he ran his race,  
Acquiring greater fame,  
With serious or comic face,  
Till he procured—a NAME.

## XXVII.

In Harlequin or funny Clown,  
At home—was BILLY GUY;  
Or “tragic bit” to gain renown,  
Was sure to have a *shy*!

## XXVIII.

To sport a toe, dance the tight rope,  
Or summerset to throw—  
Act *Dusty Bob*—dress up a POPE,  
And imitate DUCROW<sup>13</sup>.





The PEEP Show.

Too ! too ! Get down you ragged rascals, and make vay for the little  
dears vat means to pay for vat they sees. Joe, give 'em one more blast !  
It will be sure to bring 'em !

## XXIX.

O'er the kingdom, well known was GUY,  
His laughing, merry mood,  
Full of tricks, like famed PAUL PRY,  
With, "I hope, I don't intrude!"

## XXX.

A FAIR ! the gayest scene in life,  
Each person in a glow,  
For novelty and fun quite rife,  
The Boys at the PEEP SHOW !

## XXXI.

The Lion's roar—the Monkey's grin ;  
The Juggler with his balls ;  
Dwarfs and giants—thick and thin ;  
And *savoury* Sausage Stalls !

## XXXII.

With laughter, fun, and frolic gay,  
Each Actor plays his part,  
Puts forth his *tact*, and has his “*say*,”  
To please and touch the *heart*.

## XXXIII.

DON JUAN here can take his “*draps*”  
On the sly—at his post;  
And Pantaloons, those merry chaps!  
*Hobnobing* with the GHOST<sup>14</sup>!

## XXXIV.

The stately Peer<sup>15</sup>—the Critic’s sneer,  
'Midst the loud trumpets rend,  
With *larned* Pigs—and *beastes* queer,  
With laughing do *unbend*!





In an instant he plunged, disregarding his load,  
Leaving Roscius unhorsed at the side of the Road,  
No racer at Epsom e'er gallop'd much faster,  
For Goose he abhor'd—quite as much as his master!

## XXXV.

Change of scene 's the Actor's fate,  
He runs from Town to Town  
As *Stroller*—no one in the state,  
When a STAR<sup>16</sup> is coming down !

## XXXVI.

BILLY, at length, "turn'd up" the Fairs,  
A MANAGER<sup>17</sup>—d'ye see?  
A man of Pomp, with all the airs  
Tack'd to Prosperity:

## XXXVII.

Play'd all the Heroes—nice "tit bits,"  
Great Actor on *his* stage;  
Made Rolla *blush*—Hamlet on *stilts*,  
Did GUY—to be "the rage!"

## XXXVIII.

“ But Money makes the Mare to go!”  
So marks the olden tale;  
Important ’tis—with Friend or Foe—  
If you can come to *Scale*<sup>18</sup>.

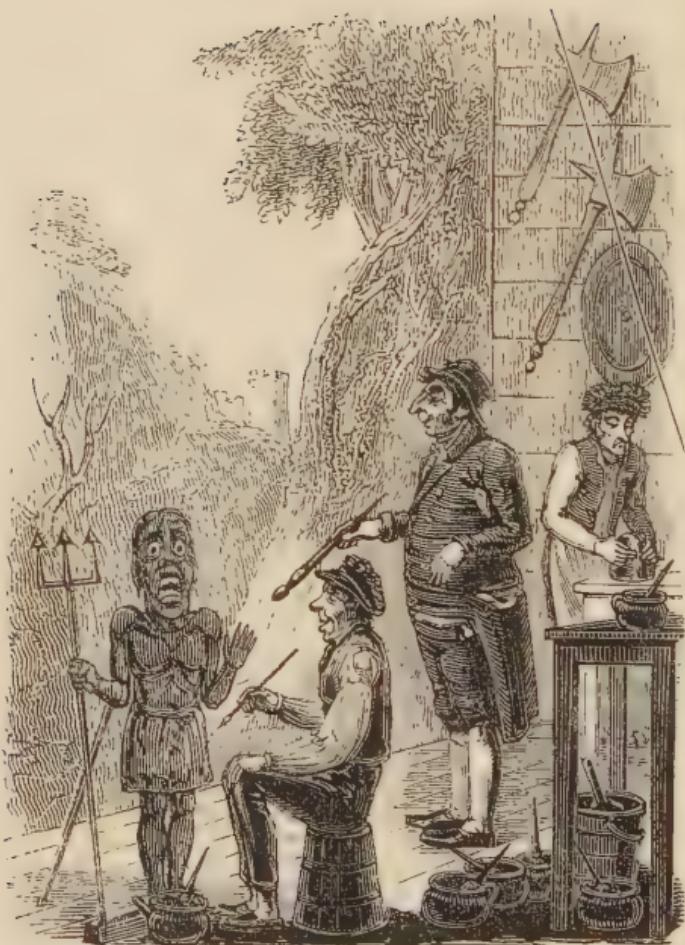
## XXXIX.

At Show, or Fair—the Play-house bold,  
Drama legitimate;  
“ The Mirror up to Nature” hold!  
The rest is—idle prate<sup>19</sup>.

## XL.

Now Authors, Poets, paid him court,  
*His nod* became the law!  
Public features to him report,  
To write a Piece to *draw*<sup>20</sup>!





SCENE PAINTING.—*Retouching a Stage Devil.*

## XL I.

The Painters soon were set to work,  
Ghosts! Demons<sup>21</sup>! in array;  
Orders obey'd, like the Grand Turk,  
To bring attractive play!

## XL II.

“Good Houses” now to make him right,  
The TREASURY to swell:  
The Actors meed—the *Props* delight—  
And “ALL’S WELL, THAT ENDS WELL<sup>22</sup>!”







A wet night!—The Theatre over—Five Shillings for a Coach to the City;—  
and not a *drag* to be got either for Love or Money. A common situation.

## NOTES.

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1. **THESPIS**, a Greek poet, of Attica, said to be the inventor of Tragedy, 536 years before Christ. His representations were rude and imperfect. He went from town to town upon a cart, on which was erected a temporary stage, where two actors, whose faces were *daubed* with the lees of wine, entertained the audience with choral songs, &c. Tumblers and other performers may often be seen in the streets of the metropolis at the present period, exhibiting their feats, and dancing upon the slack wire, in carts.

2. When Roscius was an actor in Rome,  
Then came each actor on his ass—*Hamlet*.

And some of the *great* performers of the present day, have considered it no degradation to *their* characters, to ride upon an *ass* when it suited their purpose: we remember to have seen LISTON, in his personification of Lord Grizzle, riding upon a *donkey* before the audience, in a theatre royal, thus addressing them:—

“ Behold a pair of us! before the curtain,  
A prettier couple can’t be found—that’s certain;  
Sweet BILLY SHAKSPEARE, lord of Nature’s glass,  
Has said, ‘then came each actor on his ass!’ ”

3. This sentence, perhaps, might call forth a *sneer* from the fastidious or *lucky* actor, like the late Mr. Holman, who came “ piping hot ” from the seminary in Soho Square to the boards of Covent Garden Theatre, and became a distinguished and a favourite performer, by his celebrated successful *début* in **ROMEO**. The above instance in the theatrical hemisphere, must be deemed

rather a singular one ; but, nevertheless, it is undoubtedly true. The *Show* actor is always on the alert, and enabled to gain *confidence* by his repetition of characters before the public ; and to banish from his person that worst of fears to a performer—“ stage fright !” and also the most difficult part of his profession, learning to “ stand still upon the stage,” is by him reduced to a certainty, by his being completely “ *tired out*,” and scarcely able to move one leg after the other, before the fair is half over. By such means, the roughest diamond has obtained a small polish ; and in process of time, when opportunities have offered, by rubbing against men of superior talents, has acquired a brilliancy of style, never afterwards eclipsed. The names of several actors might be mentioned, if necessary, who have acquired GREATNESS in the eyes of the public, by the above practice and experience.

4. He was a merry fellow, and in the opinion of his mamma, quite a prodigy. She was certain he would become a great actor—a second Roscius.

5. It should seem also, that she *acted* upon the opinion of the late Lord Holland, respecting the education of his son, the celebrated politician and orator, the Hon. Charles James Fox—“ never to contradict him in his pursuits.”

6. Some twenty years ago or more, the above place was well known in the theatrical circles, as a kind of preparatory school for young actors : but too frequently the injudicious applause given by the friends of the aspirants for theatrical fame, induced them to enter into a profession, for which nature had not bestowed on them the slightest requisites :

The player's province they but vainly try,  
Who want these powers, *deportment*, voice, and eye!

Yet, nevertheless, several pieces were well got up, and the performances of which would not have disgraced the walls of a theatre royal ; in fact, some of our most

popular actors of the present day, cannot deny, but they have acquired the first rudiments of the art of acting, on the boards of the above little house contiguous to Soho Square.

7. Russell Court, near Drury Lane. The above tavern afforded considerable amusement to its visitors. A few wags, fond of a bit of fun, frequented the coffee-room every evening, and, in concert together, represented themselves as managers from the country, in want of performers, and waiting in turn to engage young men for different "*lines of business*," to complete their companies. This had the desired effect; and numerous ludicrous scenes were the result, which defy any thing like communication; and enthusiastic, stage-struck, inexperienced youths afforded these *pretended* managers sport and roars of laughter, night after night. The plan generally adopted was, that one of the party kept on the look out to pick up a simple youth, and having got one in tow, he was formally introduced to the assumed proprietor of a country theatre. The latter person, with a face of gravity, then inquired whether he wished to engage for the *light* or *heavy* business of the stage, or if singing was his forte; or, perhaps, he could undertake the general line, and assist in melo-dramas, spectacles, &c. &c. The manager then, with a polite request, wished to have a "*taste*" of the young man's quality, before he finally settled his engagement, and fixed his salary. And several young aspiring heroes, anxious to obtain an engagement, have been prevailed upon to mount the table, and to give recitations from Romeo, Hamlet, Octavian, &c. amidst the shouts of *pretended* applause from country actors, wags of all sorts, and men of the world, who nightly resorted to the O. P. and P. S.\* to pick up anecdotes, and spend a

\* This tavern was designated several ways, according as it suited the different *tastes* of its visitors. The players took it in

pleasant hour. When the managers thought they had had enough of this burlesque, “the *exit*—the *exit*,” would be whispered one to another, and while the hero on the table was spouting out some impassioned speech from Shakspeare, his back would be readily assailed with the contents of their jugs; and upon the unfortunate wight hastily looking round for the authors of such an assault, his front, from another part of the company, would be attacked in the same manner. Redress was out of the question, and the more passion and rage exhibited by the youth, produced the more laughter; when he was informed it was the way to teach him how to make his “*exit* in a rage;” and that no person would deny him the title of being a *wet* actor.

8. It would form rather a laughable work, if the theatrical agents were to publish an account of the applications made by squinting heroes, to play the lovers—knock-knee’d dandies, to perform the walking gentlemen—and *lisping* heroines, to “strut and fret their hour upon the stage!”

9. The theatre of the above manager is so well constructed in all its parts, that it can be erected without the smallest difficulty in a few hours. The scenes also, although small, are of the best quality, and painted by the first artists; his stage properties are excellent, and his wardrobe is likewise of the most splendid description. The front of his theatre, alone, cost six hundred pounds. He spares no expense. In addition to which,

its original sense, to denominate the tavern a theatrical house;—and the O. P. and P. S., according to its technicality upon the stage, *Opposite Prompter*, and *Prompt Side*. The men of the world placed it in another point of view, “Come and see me to-night,” said they to a friend, “at the O. P. and P. S. where you will be sure to meet with some *Old PALS*, and hear *Prime SINGING*.” And the Bacchanalians hailed the O. P. and P. S. as the harbour containing fine *Old PORT* and *Prime SHERRY*.”

Mr. Richardson can boast of having had the greatest tragedian in existence, at one time of his life, a member of his company ; besides several other first-rate actors now before the public.

10. Amongst the *swell* performers ; otherwise, the King's servants, when technically speaking of the theatres royal to their brothers of the sock and buskin, who proudly observe, "I am engaged at the Lane ; or, you will hear of me at the Garden." But the "Lane," alluded to in this instance, is Horsemonger Lane ; where a number of engagements are suffered to *expire* ; and the *exits* in general are of the most awful nature.

11. However singular it may seem, yet nevertheless, it is strictly true, that no persons in the world are so anxious to preserve their *characters* as performers ; and however contemptuous the Chapter of CORINTHIANS may look down upon the *mummers*, as they were termed at a show in the fair, yet there is not an actor amongst them but would sooner throw up his engagement, or have a word or two with his opponent, than part with *his* character.

12. Something after the manner of a long journey, which takes the courage and spirit out of a horse. Performing thirteen and fourteen times in rapid succession at a fair, in the course of a day, seldom fails to point out to some of those theatrical enthusiasts, that they have chosen a *sorry*, instead of a *merry*, or profitable profession. The immense drudgery and fatigue which provincial actors in general have to undergo, from severe study, and numerous rehearsals, independently of their nightly performances, have induced many thoughtless persons to return to their humble occupations, and become useful members of society.

13. Only to *imitate* this extraordinary highly talented performer, would require abilities of no common order.

He is considered, nay, admitted the first horseman in the world. In the French capital, Holland, Belgium, and through all the principal cities and towns on the continent, he was designated as the “ASTONISHING Englishman.”

14. A very different sort of character from an *apparition*; nothing more nor less than flesh and blood—yet keeping up the *spirit* of the thing.

15. During the reign of George the Second—the King went more than once or twice to enjoy the humours of the scene. In Hogarth’s picture of Southwark Fair—the likeness of George II. may be easily discovered.

16. An *eclipse*, perhaps, might have been a more appropriate phrase, as scarcely any other performer is noticed or thought of, during the acting of the “*Great Creature!*”

17. Managers, by comparison, can do every thing, and like Atlas, are enabled to carry the dramatic world on their shoulders. Of course—a manager has a right to play any part he likes in his own theatre. Who doubts it?

18. **WEIGHT** on the turf, on the boards of a theatre, or upon the Stock Exchange, is of the most important consequences to the individual who possesses it. A *weighty* purse contains many persuasive qualities, and generally carries conviction with it. *Golden* sentences are very powerful in argument. A *weighty* purse is a most desirable companion at all times.

19. Of late years a great deal of *fuss* and *cant* have been made respecting the **LEGITIMATE DRAMA**; but let the performer only hold the mirror up to Nature—show Virtue her own image—and the deformity of Vice—and the *legitimacy* of the argument will never be inquired

into by a liberal and enlightened public, as to the *situation* of the theatre.

20. This is the grand *art* of management—"to *draw* houses :" but so puzzling and difficult is this sort of thing to be accomplished, that even with the assistance of *horses* in several instances, managers have not been able to produce the desired effect.

21. Within the last few years **DEMONS** have been in great request upon the stage, and to give managers credit for their exertions—*Tartarus* has been ransacked from one end to the other by different authors, to produce a variety of *devil* heroes, of many hues and colours —by which means old Pluto and his concubine Proserpine have been left in the shade by the introduction of the terrific Zamiel, the wily Mephistophiles, Asmodeus, &c. and *charmed* bullets have been selected to make decided *hits* in our theatres. Indeed, one of the *Props* of a great house, was so fascinated with the *devil-ish* fiery talents of his *red* demon, that in the enthusiasm of the moment, he sent for the editor of a well known journal, and with all the gravity and stately conduct of a theatrical monarch, wished to give him a *devil-ish* good idea for his paper, namely—to present his readers, gratis, with a portrait in red, of his highly talented demon. With deference to Mr. Hood, no *pun* being intended, but similar to Peter Pindar's allusion to a great personage, that the **DEVIL** has been a *good* subject, both to the stage and "the press ;" and Bob Cruikshank has had a *devil-ish* fine time of it, by giving new lights and shades to the *old* gentleman, in order to render his appearance more palatable to the public taste—thus giving a climax to the adage, that "**MONEY** is the **DEVIL**." The above Tartarian chief, it appears, was first discovered in a literary point of *view*, in a *Marsh* near Oxford Street, whose pursuits were soon afterwards promulgated by a well known *Kidd* in Bond Street—and during his

“walks,” selected a resting place near the *Pope’s* alley ; but however popular the **DEVIL** may be at the present moment, he must take great care if he does not furnish more *novelty* to avoid the dangers of being *shelved*. In fact, the cloven-footed hero has now become such a “familiar spirit” with us, by the repeated representations of Dr. Faustus, the Devil’s Elixir, the Bottle Imp, Der Freischütz, and Pluto in London ; added to the numerous publications of the Devil’s Walk, the Real Devil’s Walk, the Devil’s Drive, the Devil’s Progress, &c. that it is *seriously* apprehended, if some NEW object of terror is not shortly produced, the poor **DEVIL** must be absolutely worn out, and voted “stale, flat, and unprofitable.” But a great authority in matters of this sort, and a well known caterer for the public for the last forty years, Muster **RICHARDSON**, he has given it as his most decided opinion, that to give any *treasury* a good *turn*, there is nothing like the **UNITIES** for producing *effect*, and *blunt* into the bargain—a *gong*—**BLUE OR RED FIRE**—and a **BLEEDING GHOST**!!!

22. Respecting the danger of speculating in theatrical property, it is said (but we do not vouch for the truth of the assertion) to have been no uncommon occurrence at Drury Lane Theatre, for the lessee to be out of pocket between four and five thousand pounds, from the commencement of the season until Christmas. But a successful pantomime has not only fetched up the loss, but turned the balance in favour of the season. Thus, it appears, depending more on the *attitudes* of Harlequin, the *lively steps* of Columbine, the *comical phiz* of the Clown, and the *aid* of the scene painter, than the resources of the **LEGITIMATE DRAMA**, to produce the desired effect of **SHAKSPEARE**’s words—“ All’s Well that Ends Well.”

# BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

## THE LIFE

OF THE LATE

### MR. THEODORE LANE.

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Praising what is lost—  
Makes the Remembrance more dear!—SHAKSPEARE.

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THE premature and melancholy death of the above highly talented, much respected, and rising artist, perhaps, renders any apology perfectly unnecessary, after a lapse of time of nearly two years and a half, for the publication of this Sketch; but the only thing to be regretted is, that the task had not fallen into abler hands; at all events, by some person intimately connected with the FINE ARTS, whose name might have given it an importance, which it does not, cannot now possess. But in order to rescue the name of a young man from total oblivion, who, under more favourable circumstances, might, at some future period, have shed a lustre upon the Fine Arts, and whose works which were fast rising into notice, might have been enrolled with some of our greatest painters, if not handed down to posterity, has not only been the laudable but humble attempt of the writer of the sketch in question, but it is also offered as a kind of stimulus to other young men possessing a taste for painting, to show to them what difficulties may be overcome by genius and perseverance

united—even without the cheering smiles and assistance of a patron. OPIE was raised into eminence from the rude, obscure situation of a country sawpit at the Land's End, by the late Dr. Walcot (but better known as the celebrated Peter Pindar), a host within himself as to talent—also a great admirer of talent in others; nay more, a strenuous supporter of it upon all occasions. The melancholy subject of this memoir never possessed such an advantage.

THEODORE LANE was born at Isleworth, in Middlesex, in the year 1800. His father was a native of the city of Worcester, and by profession, a drawing master, but for several years before his death he was rendered incapable of teaching his art, by repeated and severe attacks of the gout and rheumatism; indeed, he was a complete martyr to the latter complaint. Owing to these unfortunate circumstances, the finances of his father became rather *straitsened*, and the education of young Theodore was in a great degree, if not almost totally, neglected. At the age of fourteen years he was apprenticed to a Mr. Barrow, at Battle Bridge, a colourer of expensive prints, and who was considered as a man of ability in that line. It was during his apprenticeship that Lane first displayed a taste for drawing; Theodore, not having been in the slightest manner indebted to his parent for any instructions in the above art. His juvenile sketches, on being shown to Mr. Barrow, he (Mr. B.) was very much pleased with them, and in the kindest manner pointed out to Theodore those defects which naturally arise from youth and inexperience. LANE gratefully profited by his instructions.

Mr. Barrow saw, or thought he saw in those early sketches, that sort of talent indicative of future greatness; and he therefore encouraged him to proceed with the most unremitting industry until he overcame all the difficulties which every artist has to surmount on his first entrance into life. Mr. Barrow always entertained

an opinion that one day or another the proud initials of R. A. might be added to his name.

LANE had scarcely finished his apprenticeship, when he most laudably aspired to become an artist; and to obtain *notoriety* with the public was his next object in view; but at the same time he was without a friend to take him by the hand—no patron to give him a lift; and a perfect stranger to any person of eminence connected with the fine arts. Theodore however was not dismayed—he possessed an ambitious mind, and with empty pockets to give him an *impetus*, he cudgelled his brains for a subject, and very soon produced six designs of the “LIFE OF AN ACTOR.” This done—his next, but difficult aim was to get them published. He, therefore, to use his own words, gave his shoes an extra polish, brushed his coat well, paid more than ordinary attention to his hat—of course, a clean shirt and cravat—and thus *tidivated*, with his small portfolio under his arm, he went forwards to push his fortune in the world.

Strange to say, instead of exploring the classic regions as a mart for his talents—instead of making his bow to Mr. Murray, or offering his designs to the “all-publishing” Mr. Colburn, as a decided proof of his ignorance in those matters, not to say bad taste, he knocked at the door of the humble *domus* of the scribbler of “Life in London,” in the year 1822, between the hours of eight and nine o’clock in the morning, in Spann’s Buildings, St. Pancras. “Admit him!” was the cry, something similar to the rough accent of the most noble grand of a lodge of Odd Fellows, when the heavy chain behind the door of the lodge is thrown down for the entrance of the novice, and LANE soon ascended into the presence of the *slang* writer he had heard so much talk about\*. It is most true, that THEODORE did not

\* The name of the author of “Life in London,” at the period alluded to, appeared daily for several months in the Play Bills of five of the Metropolitan Theatres.

exclaim, nor start after the highly-finished manner of the late John Kemble—

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!  
Be thou——?

neither did he “run away” like Monsieur Tonson, but he appeared very much surprised, as if he had mistaken the apartment, on beholding a person busily employed in writing, whose head appeared to him like the rough hedgehog, with a beard of nearly four days’ growth—a waistcoat which had seen much better days, discovering a part of his naked breast—*aged* pantaloons, that would have puzzled any draper as to their original colour—a coat, or rather a part of one, that might once have been the pride of a *Snyder* as to its fashionable recommendation, but then reduced to a worn-out thread-bare remnant—and with slippers to correspond, the sad relics of better days. The *tout ensemble* like one of the members of the Bampfylde Moore Carew Club, well dressed for the part, although put on without the aid of a *reflecting* mirror—worn only for ease, and without a single thought as to the value of appearance\*. The *dress* bad enough (according to the accepted term of “First Impressions;”) and the *ad-dress*, merely exempt from rudeness, perhaps in perfect *keeping* with the other parts of the character. LANE, not exactly recovered from his surprise, observed, “I believe, I am speaking to Mr. Egan!” “Most certainly, sir. Pray be seated: but I shall be candid with you, as *time* is on the wing with me: I am compelled to finish a few lines for the press—my *prad* is at the door, and as I must have two-pen’orth of decency before I start for the *mill*, while I am *toggling* myself, I can listen to you with every atten-

\* Artists, authors, engravers, &c. wish to be more at their ease and freedom during their studies, than set any time apart to pay attention to their persons or dress—although they may be viewed as *drawing rooms*.

tion, therefore, if you will have the kindness to get over the ground as fast as you can, I shall feel very much obliged to you?" LANE, with considerable modesty, presented to my view, six designs, observing at the same time—"Sir, if you will undertake to write a work to accompany these illustrations—it will be of great service to me, and I assure you, Mr. Ackerman or Mr. Sherwood, will purchase the manuscript." "But have you any materials, Mr. Lane?" "None, sir! But I have no doubt, your intimate acquaintance with so many theatrical persons, and your knowledge of the stage, it will be a matter of little, if any trouble to you, to produce the work in question." "To deal fairly by you, Mr. Lane, my *upper works* at the present moment are so overcharged with the FANCY, that I cannot lose the time to spare a single thought upon the *imagination*; and therefore, I am sorry to say, that I must decline your offer." By this time the *barbatic* had changed the appearance of that face which at first had caused him to start, ten to one, more in favour towards the *agreeable*; the comb had also given a more decent appearance to the *nob*, and the fretful porcupine quills had been reduced to something like order; the white *cameza* gave that sort of improvement to the figure, like a dirty room that has experienced white-washing; the Belcher *Fogle* round the squeeze, did not only add but improve the *look*—the white cords and top boots were also an improvement—and the Witney upper Benjamin, decorated with large mother o'pearl buttons, now encompassed the frame—the *castor* (one of *Perring's* lightest, but knowing) covered the "knowledge box"—the gloves on—the *persuader* in the hand—and "time" called to mount the *drag*, to bear in mind that twenty-one miles must be accomplished before one o'clock.

Hear it not, MR. NORTHCOTE—do not listen to it,

SIR MARTIN SHEE, Knt. that instead of a classical hero being called upon to do justice to the drawings of the enterprising THEODORE LANE—just upon entering one of the most arduous and difficult professions in life, instead of having to encounter the microscopic eye of the critic—the rigid pause—the slow, half suspended sentence from the man of judgment—which so often makes tyros wince again, and proficients tremble—the hopes and fears on all sides attached to merit—behold ONE OF THE FANCY selected to give an opinion—with “Ya! hip!” escaping from his lips, anxious to “push along, and keep moving,” until the grand object in view—the “prize ring” appeared in sight! “Good by, my dear fellow” (giving LANE’s talented bunch of fives a friendly shake), come and see me as often as you think proper, though I do not possess the vanity to set myself up as a judge in these matters, believe me, I always feel myself honoured by the *call* of a man of talent.” Poor LANE seemed sadly disappointed with the termination of the interview—the chance was lost—not only as to his appearing before the public as an artist—but his designs, at least for some time, were nothing more than waste paper as to the productions of the cash (always so much in request by the *needy* artist), and he “toddled off” with “a countenance more in sorrow than in anger.” The *prad* on feeling the whip was off in prime style, displaying fine action like a first rate player—and in less than an hour I had joined the bustle on the road, with lords and commoners—and “seven to four, you don’t name the winner” soon *distanced*, THEODORE LANE and his drawings completely out of my mind. Such is the fate of genius!

But two years afterwards another interview proved more successful to LANE. An engagement was entered into with the late Mr. Arnold, of Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, to publish the “Life of an Actor.”

In consequence of which THEODORE obtained for his twenty-seven designs and etchings, and also drawings for nine wood cuts, the liberal sum of one hundred and fifty pounds, fifteen shillings. This work was dedicated to Mr. KEAN\*. Lane often gratefully declared to his friends, the above publication proved his *stepping stone* not only to a more enlarged acquaintance with men and manners, but it brought him forward in society, and improved his circumstances, and likewise was the means of giving him an introduction to several eminent persons connected with the Fine Arts.

LANE was now tolerably well employed by different publishers on a variety of subjects, and the following plates, in rapid succession, were sent forth to the public, with considerable success :—

“ *Scientific Pursuits; or, Hobby Horse Races to the Temple of Fame,*” in four folio plates, exhibit a great deal of thought and inventive genius ; and the subjects altogether display considerable humour. The design or painting—“ working for *Fame*, painting her portrait,” although portrayed in a most ludicrous point of view, might nevertheless be applied to his own unfortunate case, “ What’s fame? a fancied life in others breath !”

“ *The Parson’s Clerk;*” a comic song, written by the celebrated and facetious Tom Hudson :

From righteous paths he turn’d astray,  
And even on the Sabbath Day,  
Drav’d himself in a one horse *shay*,  
In the Park !

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\* PEREGRINE PROTEUS was written principally to introduce the artist to the notice of the public; and I am happy to inform you that the desired object has been accomplished; a young man of talent has not only been rescued from oblivion, but perhaps the success he has met with by his delineations of the “ Life of an Actor,” may afford him still further opportunities to amuse and interest society.—Dec. 1824.

And all the week—I don't know how,  
 At singing glees he made a row,  
 "Glorious Apollo."  
 And got as drunk as Davy's sow,  
 The Parson's Clerk!

The four illustrations to the above subject, expose cant and hypocrisy in its truest colours; and the talents of the artist have done complete justice to the words of the author.

"*Legal Illustrations*," consisting of seventy humourous applications of law terms, to the occupations of fashionable and convivial life.—"This is a whimsical idea, and the execution displays considerable humour in the details; and we commend the publication for the portfolios which while away the tedious half hour before dinner."—*Literary Gazette*.

"*The Masquerade at the Argyle Rooms*," a large plate, full of characters who "strutted and fretted" their hour in those gay regions of pleasure, frolic, and fun. This plate was generally admired on its publication, as a very clever representation of the lively scene.

"*New Year's Morning, the Old One out, and the New One coming in*." In addition to the "How came you so?" topers—the artist has displayed his wit. The president, a jolly fellow, has got the empty bowl on his head, as the old one *out*, laughing, and pointing at the waiter, who has a full bowl of punch in his hands, as the new one *coming in*.

"*Sunday Morning—the Barber's Shop*." LANE has been extremely happy in his representation of the mixed group which are generally to be met with on such an occasion. He has been equally so—in the "*Shilling Fare to a Christmas Dinner; or, just in Pudding Time*."

"*The Rival Whiskers*;" and "*Amorous and Clamorous*;" sketches of the prevailing features of the day—both of them are highly ludicrous, and had a good sale at the time of their publication.

Some of the illustrations of the “Life of an Actor,” have been pronounced by several persons of eminence, connected with the pursuits of the stage, decidedly good, and like a well-worked up scene on the stage, appeal very strongly to the feelings\*—“*PROTEUS visiting Comic Dick in the workhouse, an actor of great celebrity at one period of his life.*” This is a most affecting, but correct representation of the infirmities of old age, and the imbecility of human nature; and LANE has entered into the subject with all the spirit of our immortal bard—

“ Last scene of all  
That ends this strange eventful history  
Is second childishness, and mere oblivion,  
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing.”

THEODORE, in order to give real life to the scene, went on purpose, to a workhouse, where he drew the above sketch.

LANE also illustrated a work, called, “A Complete Panorama of the Sporting World,” with thirteen original etchings, and the same number of designs on wood. Several of them have been pronounced excellent—amongst them—“*A Parish Concern; or, Prominent Reasons for Matrimony:*” is a rich picture of the method of *match-making* by parish officers. The almost *idiotic* simplicity of the bridegroom, the *thriving* appearance of the lady, and the formidable look of the men with the gold-laced hats to witness the ceremony—prove the artist to have been a man of considerable observation. Also, “*How to pick up a RUM ONE to look at, and a good ONE to go in Smithfield,*” is a highly characteristic representation of the *flats* and *sharps* in the horse line in that neighbourhood on market days; and the “interesting interview between Mr. Matthews and his Irish theatrical barber,” is a most delightful sketch: and gives

\* It is impossible for us to do justice to the spirit of the designs, many of which would not discredit the pencil of Hogarth.—*Monthly Critical Gazette.*

life and vigour to an anecdote, highly honourable to the feelings of that celebrated comedian.

LANE was quite aware that however strong his *imagination* might be towards the production of subjects for his pencil ; and that “ *lay figures* ” might be of the most essential service to him, by acquiring correct positions of the anatomy of the human frame, yet like the late **Lord BYRON**, he preferred studying from real life, the warmth of animation, and the beautiful tints attendant upon the glow of health and beauty :

She was one  
Fit for the model of a statuary  
(A race of mere impostors when all's done),  
I've seen much finer women, ripe and real,  
Than all the nonsense of their *stone* ideal !

THEODORE was not exactly one of the gay *Tom King's* decided votaries :

To him a frolic was a high delight,  
A frolic he would hunt for day and night,  
Careless how prudence on the sport might frown :

although LANE was anxious to catch the manners “ living as they rise ! ” he therefore visited the masquerades, and the characters which he sustained in general had an originality about them, which reflected credit on his understanding ; but his *masques*, painted for the occasion by himself, were of the most attractive description, perfectly true to nature ; in fact, nothing like them were seen throughout those scenes of fun, folly, and humour. On his personification of one of the “ frozen-out gardeners ” at the Argyle Rooms, the cabbage he held in his hand, soliciting “ *charity*, ” with the appearance of *isicles* all over it, was the admiration of all the *masqueraders*, who thought it no lost time amidst their revels to step aside to applaud talent. On another occasion, as the representative of an “ *out-patient* ” to an hospital, his *mask* had a most appalling appearance—the spectators fled from it with horror and disgust, but

nevertheless it was a fine portrait of disease and wretchedness—and exhibited a rich specimen of the abilities of the artist, and his great attention to nature. Enveloped in a white sheet down to his heels, at another English carnival, when the rooms were crowded with masks of the most lively description—and *fun* at its height—*frolic* on the alert—the clowns exhibiting their grimaces—and Harlequin and Columbine exerting themselves on the “light fantastic toe,” during that delightful Spanish air, “*Isabel*,” LANE entered with a slow and solemn stride—all eyes were fixed on him; he had on his head a tall paper cap, made of foolscap, pointed at the end like the steeple of a church, and a long staff in his hand, while he motioned the audience to listen to his admonition: his *mask* was ghastly in the extreme, like death upon the pale horse, indeed it seemed to “grin horribly a ghastly smile,” accompanied with a sepulchral tone of voice—“Remember, sons and daughters of pleasure! Remember, I say,” stamping with his staff on the floor, “there must be an end of all things, therefore, make the most of your time.” There was a *freezing* sort of look about the figure altogether, a kind of *stopper* on the dance and song—and the various groups of characters appeared pleased when he retired to a corner of one of the boxes, and took rather an elevated seat to view and make his comments on the gay scene. In a large picture, representing the masquerade at the Argyll Rooms, drawn by Lane, the above portrait may be seen in the second box on the right hand side.

He was fond of visiting the theatres: and, to use his own words, it gave him a more intimate acquaintance with elegant attitudes\*, and a better knowledge of cos-

\* Had he lived to have seen the *attitudes* recently exhibited by Mr. Ducrow, Theodore would have united in the general praise, “that such classical specimens of the ancient statues were never before witnessed.”

tume and draperies ; and he also ventured to criticise the merits of those actors which at various times claimed his particular attention. KEAN was his idol ; he viewed him as one of the finest delineators of the human passions ; and as a performer who had attained the very summit of his profession. YOUNG, he often praised as an actor of sterling merit—a strong, but nevertheless a beautiful painter in oil ; and altogether a classical subject. His Hamlet, a great treat ; and one of the triumphs of the histrionic art. MACREADY, as a melo-dramatic actor, astonished him ; his William Tell, called forth raptures of delight ; but the Virginius of Mr. M. was a master-piece. CHARLES KEMBLE stood high, very high, in his estimation as a more general actor than either of the above distinguished performers. His personification of Charles the Second, THEODORE thought the term “perfection” might be applied to it without a murmur from the most rigid critic in the kingdom—it was *kingly* from the top of his head to the sole of his foot ; and “his laugh” would have reflected credit on the studied fastidious Chesterfield, and even the elegant George IV. might have pronounced it *courtly*, from its superiority of taste : his gait and address likewise were so perfectly in keeping with the character, that it might prove a fine school for nobility and gentry to study grace and ease, without which, no portrait can be acquired of the finished gentleman. The Young Mirable of Mr. Charles Kemble, was also one of the finest pieces of acting on the stage. Although the head of LISTON\* might “not be worshiped in the streets of the metropolis,” he said, “his face was a fine study for an artist, as it had proved a

\* Mr. Lane made a sketch quite in character of “Paul Pry’s first night in a boarding house:” to be succeeded by eleven others, representing the *Pry-ing* qualities of that celebrated dramatic hero. The sketch is now in my possession. The death of Mr. L. prevented their publication.

rich portrait to the treasury of the different theatres. The funny JOHN REEVES—a great body of talent on or off the boards ;—and his *Abrahamides*, one of the richest specimens of burlesque ever witnessed upon any stage ; and Bob Keeley, in his line, was *multum in parvo*.

He did not neglect to visit any of the places of note in the metropolis, whereby he could obtain information or knowledge of public characters, and spend a pleasant hour or two. During the lifetime of the late Billy Oxberry, when that comical wight acted the part of *Boniface*, Theodore often visited his coffee-room at the Craven's Head, Drury Lane, to hear Oxberry tell his tales, and relate his theatrical adventures. Indeed, poor Oxberry, was a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy.

At the Kean's Head, formerly the O. P. in Russel Court, Drury Lane, Theodore frequently attended the harmonic meetings held on Saturday evenings ; and often expressed himself delighted with the talents of his friends Tom Hudson and Mr. Beuler, both celebrated for their productions of comic songs and singing them. He also became acquainted here with the late excentric but highly talented Ralph Shervin ; who, independent of his theatrical abilities, ranked high as a clever artist.

Lane, to improve his mind, now and then dropped into the Wrekin in Broad Court, Long Acre, kept at that period by a Mr. Williams, a person connected with literary pursuits. The visitors frequenting this tavern were principally *reporters*, better known, perhaps, as gentlemen connected with the press—by others facetiously termed the “*PRESS-GANG!*” a sprinkling of first-rate theatricals ; an author or two ; men of the world ; and intelligent persons in general. If THEODORE was compelled to be a *silent* spectator, to see, hear, and say nothing amongst the wits, orators, and men of literary talents, he nevertheless treasured up in his mind that sort of *intelligence* respecting the passing

subjects of the day—opinions upon public characters; the theatres; arts and sciences, &c. tending not only to enrich his understanding, but to give him more extended notions of men and manners, and society in general; and which, as an artist, he might turn to a good account at some other period. THEODORE often expressed himself delighted with a gentleman of the name of Graham; in truth, so was every other person who frequented the *Wrekin*. Mr. Graham was an orator of the first class, an eminent writer, an excellent reporter, and a man calculated to shine as a fixed star in any hemisphere, however surrounded by talents\*. Since which period, Mr. Graham unfortunately lost his life in a duel in America, owing to a literary dispute. Indeed the *Wrekin*, at the time alluded to, afforded nightly a fund of amusement and intelligence to its visitors—and so high did it stand in the estimation of the magistrates, that when an information was laid against it for being open at late hours, upon a proper representation being made to the chief magistrate, Sir Richard Birnie, in good taste, observed that gentlemen who contributed so much towards the *luxury* of the mind, and to whose services and talents the country was highly indebted, some place of refreshment ought to be allotted to them, and no person he thought could or would quarrel with such an indulgence. The *Wrekin* was a house of no common description.

Notwithstanding the assertion of the poet, that “a little learning is a dangerous thing!” poor THEODORE, on being introduced to the company of persons of a superior description in society, found out, by comparison, without any one to remind him of his deficiency, that he had had “too little” of it in his boyish days; and therefore, with the most determined industry, de-

\* It is a well known fact, that a city orator, of some repute, was indebted to Mr. Graham for the composition of his speeches.

voted all his leisure hours to repair the above neglect—so prejudicial to the rising talents of an artist.

The “Harp” in Russel Street, Drury Lane, well known, if the phrase is not offensive to the profession, as a House of Call for Actors, which LANE has so well represented in one of the plates of the “Life of an Actor,” frequently claimed an hour or two of his time, on different evenings. The scene was altogether attractive; and lots of fun and humour were the result. He had an opportunity of viewing the conduct of players out of engagements; spouting youths, anxious to become actors; and other perfect enthusiasts. But it was his opinion, that he derived a knowledge of *character* by these visits; and that he also got an insight into the eccentricities of human nature. Therefore he considered his *time* was not totally lost.

However the *fastidious* part of mankind might quarrel with his *taste* for visiting the above mentioned places—his answers were of that description, as to silence his opponents. “If I have visited the FINISH,” said he, “when the rational part of society have been at their rest, and I might have been looked upon as a loose, dissipated sort of fellow, the next day, perhaps, my studies have been fully occupied at the Marquis of Stafford’s fine gallery of pictures—as a *redeeming* sort of quality. And as a set-off to my visit to the *Cyder Cellar*; two or three hours spent at ‘Angerstein’s Collection of Paintings,’ have made amends for it. The row, sporting, and other vociferous scenes at the HARP, have been repaired by the lectures at the Royal Academy. The singing at the Kean’s Head, has never caused me for an instant to neglect my views of the paintings in Suffolk Street—and in spending an hour or two at the Fives Court, in order to view the anatomy of the human frame, and the beauty and action of the muscles—the contrast of witnessing the “different masters” at

the British Institution, pointed out to the artist the advantages of uniting *still* with REAL LIFE.

“A Trip to ASCOT RACES,” dedicated to his late Majesty, upwards of seventeen feet in length, and coloured after life and nature, designed and etched by Theodore Lane. Exhibiting from Hyde Park Corner all the bustle of the lively scene on the road down to the Heath; being a complete characteristic picture of the gaiety, fashion, elegance, taste, fun, frolic, whim, adventures, manners, upsets, rows, chitchat, &c. from the Corinthian driving his splendid four-in-hand, down to the humble peasant on his ten toes. The following sketch is extracted from the descriptive key which accompanies the engraving—“No. 32. The artist, Mr. Theodore Lane, is seen making a sketch of the course. This young man, although self-taught, is rapidly rising in his profession—his first public attempt were the designs which illustrate the “Life of an Actor.” The frontispiece to the above work is replete with mind, genius, and talent. Since that period he has produced several caricature subjects, founded on the passing events of the day; the whole of them have been well received by the public. His likenesses in water-colours are very much admired for their softness and beauty of colouring, and likewise for the elegance and taste he has displayed in the dresses of his females. It is rather singular to remark, Mr. Lane sketches and paints with his left hand. Within the last few months he has attempted oil-painting, with more than ordinary success. His first subject was the “*Drunken Gardener*,” which was highly approved of by an artist of eminence: his second attempt, the “*Organ of Murder!*” This painting possesses considerable point. The *smattering* craniologist with the skull in his hand, viewing the *Organ of Murder*, is feeling his head with a kind of doubt and fear, to ascertain whether the above dreadful organ is stamped

upon his own *skull!* On the above subject being submitted to the above gentleman for his opinion, he viewed it with increased satisfaction, and begged of Mr. Lane to proceed with painting in oil with unabated ardour: his third and last subject, “An Hour before the Duel,” exhibited at the British Institution in Pall Mall, has been more than successful. The idea is excellent; and “airy nothing,” in this instance, is embodied on the canvass, with a reality of touch, and vigour of mind, so as to leave no other impression on the feelings of the spectator than that of an actual portrait, sketched in the moment of agony and suspense of the supposed duellist, is strongly marked with the uncertainty of his situation:—

Of that bourne, from whence no traveller returns,  
Puzzles the will!

He is gazing with the most impassioned delight on the miniature of his beloved mistress, perhaps, for the last time; his eye meeting the challenge, and the instrument of death firmly grasped in his hand. He is also anxiously tracing the motion of his watch which directs the time of meeting; his bed undisturbed, added to the general disorder of his apartment, are all so highly characteristic of the subject in question, that we are led to expect much better things from this young and almost obscure artist, rising in the very arduous profession of OIL PAINTING.”

A large, clever design was made by Lane, and published by M’Lean in the Haymarket, intituled, “*Law, gorging on the Spoils of Fools, and Rogues, and Honest Men among Folly and Knavery, producing Repentance and Ruin; or, the fatal Effects of legal Rapacity.*” The above plate exhibits a considerable deal of wit and satire; and tends to show in a great degree that poor THEODORE was a more attentive observer of passing circumstances in the world, connected with the vitals of

society, than his friends might be disposed to give him credit for. The sketch represents the high road to law—leading to ruin, through various toll gates—namely, the opinion of counsel, injunction, filing the bill, consultation, procrastination, &c.

When a cause you have got coming on,  
How the BIG-WIGS will smile you upon ;  
And they'll beat you *ten to one*,  
While they make of you a Cat's-paw :  
And they lay on your SOVEREIGNS their claw,  
Which into their fobs they will draw ;  
Then tip you a long oration,  
With pomp and ostentation ;  
And leave you in consternation,  
At their J,A,W, Jaw !  
Which is all that you get for LAW,  
Excepting a *Pish !* or a PSHA !

However singular to remark, yet it is strictly true, that in all his rambles on the town, he was *cold* propriety—yes, and convinced his friends after the manner of Falstaff, that “ discretion is the better part of valour.” LANE also followed Shakspeare’s advice to the letter, “ never to put an enemy into his mouth to steal away his brains :” he seldom *indulged* beyond his pint and a half of *heavy*—a welsh rabbit—and a glass of gin and water. No persuasion could induce him to alter his rule : I never saw him in any thing like a row during my acquaintance with him ; and I have often heard him declare that he was never *intoxicated* in the whole course of his life. His disposition and general conduct were truly mild and peaceable ; and his notions of honour and integrity were not to be excelled. Although mixing with a variety of persons, in different companies, and temper, he always conducted himself so well as to keep out of mischief ; yet he was no *starter*, and daylight often rendered her assistance to him, when he sought the keyhole of the street door, to return in safety to his repose. But these sort of evenings were of the *en*

*passant* kind, to relieve his mind, and dispel the *ennui* of a solitary apartment, one of the dull accompaniments of a young bachelor—which, at the period alluded to, belonged to his title.

The progress which he made in OIL PAINTING was rapid in the extreme: in less than twelve months from the commencement of his studies—he produced a piece of considerable merit; it is, however, but common justice to state, that owing to the kindness, attention, and liberality of disposition displayed by his friend Mr. Fraser (an artist of the first class), who not only gave Lane suggestions upon the subject, but permitted him at various times to paint with him (Mr. F.) at his own house, and under his immediate inspection.

“The ENTHUSIAST,” exhibited at Somerset House, at the time of his death, was the admiration of all the persons who viewed the painting which represented an old gentleman laid up with the gout, and his legs on two chairs. He is so much attached to the pleasures of angling, that he is seen with his rod and line in his hand, fishing in a water-tub placed a few yards from him; and, to all appearance, enjoying the sport, as if his line was actually in a river. LANE, in his own person, was a decided angler, and often defied the effects of the “pitiless, pelting storm,” when *comfortably* seated (as he said), by the side of a river; and who never complained of a want of sport, if he only obtained, like Dr. Franklin’s fisherman, “*a nibble*,” throughout a long summer’s day\*. This painting, we understand, is under the hands of an eminent engraver (R. Graves) and will shortly make its appearance before the public.

“*The Poet reading his Manuscript Play of Five Acts to a judicious Friend*”—

\* It is thus the John Bull of May 25, 1828, speaks of the above picture, respecting the unfortunate Theodore, “whose clever little picture of the Enthusiast shines a perfect gem amongst the trash and rubbish of the Suffolk Street Gallery.”

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven.

But on turning round his head to receive the *nod* of approbation for some animated sentence which the poet flatters himself deserving of applause, to his great disappointment and mortification, before he has arrived at the end of the second act, he finds his judge fast asleep. There is a great deal of character about this painting: the look of the poet, who appears chagrined at the neglect he has experienced, is finely delineated; while his any thing but *attentive* critic seems quite comfortable in the enjoyment of a sound *nap*. Too much like the managers of olden times, who permitted many good plays to rest for ever, without they were made *awake* to the *merits* of the piece or pieces, by a gentle hint from a duke or a lord as to the value of good advice, added to the sun-shining effects of—*lordly* patronage!

“**TOO MANY COOKS SPOIL THE BROTH.**”—This is a very laughable subject, and most admirably executed. Several monkeys are represented as acting as cooks, and whose grimaces are highly ludicrous, upon their putting a little kitten into a saucepan full of boiling water. A satisfactory *grin* not only appears on the whole of their countenances, but the *cunning* also, so well known to belong to monkeys, is truly conspicuous.

“***The Night Mare!***” This painting was generally admired by the lovers of the Fine Arts; and after the lamentable death of Mr. LANE, it was engraved and published as a *remembrance* of his rising and admired talents as an artist. The *Night Mare*, in this instance, is treated as a reality; and not as, in former instances, “the fancied creation of the brain.” It is a *funny* subject altogether—some wag, it should seem, has tied the tail of a white mare to the knocker of a street door, and the servant boy upon opening the door to attend the loud

and repeated summons—betrays all that fright and kind of simplicity which distinguishes the good acting of Mr. Keeley in the character of the alarmed *Fritz*, on his first sight of the *Monster* in *Frankenstein*.

“ *The MATHEMATICIAN’S ABSTRACTION.*” This painting is a decided proof of the inventive faculties of poor Lane, although his hand was arrested in its progress, by unrelenting death:—

O great man-eater !  
 Whose every day is carnival, nor sated yet !  
 Unheard of epicure, without a fellow !  
 The veriest gluttons do not always cram ;  
 Some intervals of abstinence are sought  
 To edge the appetite ; THOU seekest none !

The above subject is not only well chosen, but excellently well executed: the *mind* of the mathematician appears completely abstracted by his studies, and he is seen boiling his watch, instead of an egg; nor does he discover his mistake until he looks at the egg to learn the time. This picture was finished by his sincere friend Mr. Fraser; and Lord Northwick purchased it.

LANE, on being introduced to George Cruikshank, the above celebrated artist appeared much pleased with the etchings and designs shown to him; and he also complimented THEODORE on his abilities. Robert Cruikshank was equally liberal with his remarks; and both of these highly talented men were ever afterwards his friends. He taught himself to etch his own designs upon copper, and had his life have been preserved, there is no doubt but he would have become an excellent mezzotinto engraver, as he had made considerable progress in that line of art.

It was the opinion of Mr. Cooper, the celebrated artist, that “ Lane was a man of considerable talent; every thing that came from his hand, had manifest signs of genius and humour. I have seen,” said he, “ several slight sketches by him, that were full of wit, one or two I recollect. ‘ *Scraping an Acquaintance*,’ a fellow out

hunting having fallen over head into a ditch, his friend had a large pocket knife scraping the mud from his scarlet coat. Another, a parody on '*O fly not yet\*!*' an old fellow, rather too fat for a shooter, blundering over a rail, while a wild duck is getting away; the latter, a drawing I have, through the kindness of Mr. Henry Wakefield, the good fortune to possess."

Like the celebrated Dr. Johnson, Lane was passionately fond of tea, six or seven cups he could dispose of with great ease and pleasure to himself; and as a water-drinker, he excelled all the men I ever saw.

How extremely affecting for his relatives to reflect, that, just as he had ascended a few steps up the difficult ladder of FAME, and looking anxiously forwards to that day when he should be able to arrive at the top, as a painter of eminence :

Ah! who can tell how hard it is to climb  
The steep, where FAME's proud temple shines afar!

just as he had acquired a name amongst the booksellers and publishers as an artist, and a designer of merit—just as he had overcome his little difficulties, and enabled to keep from his door that too common attendant on artists and authors—POVERTY, and living in a style of respectability—just as his miniatures and portraits were admired by the public—blessed with a most amiable wife and two children, in the vigour of health and youth, and prosperity and fame almost within his grasp—and just as he was starting on a party of pleasure to spend an agreeable day in the country, with his wife and relatives, in order to relieve his mind, and return to his studies with fresh vigour—in less than one little minute—the recollection of the circumstance is terrific, nay, awful beyond description—

\* The above design, the first of a series, drawn only a few days before his death, was intended for a work, similar to Mr. Hood's *Whims and Oddities*.

The GRAVE, dread thing !  
Men shiver when thou art named : NATURE appall'd,  
Shakes off her wonted firmness !

hurried into eternity without a parting sigh—without one farewell—or even time to offer up an ejaculation to his Maker—the much admired, talented Theodore Lane, had become a CORPSE.

Oh ! what toils—  
What studies, night and day—what hopes, what prayers,  
What aspirations, what ecstatic thoughts,  
And wild imaginings of fancy bright,  
Are his, as up the weary steep he climbs,  
To win renown—to win that glory which  
MUST ONLY SHINE UPON HIS EARLY GRAVE !  
Alas ! ill-fated artist, thy proud hopes  
Were, like the bard's, to disappointment doom'd !  
Thy expectations all cut off—thyself  
Left in thy prime to wither, like the bud,—  
The flower-bud rich of promise, by the frost  
Cut off untimely !—

It appears that on Wednesday morning, May 21, 1828, Mr. Lane, then residing in Judd Street, Brunswick Square, called upon his brother-in-law, Mr. Henry Wakefield, surgeon, of Battle Bridge ; for the purpose of proceeding with his gig as far as Mill Hill, Hampstead, to join a party of friends and relatives, who had gone there to spend the day. Mrs. Lane had previously set out for the place with one of her brothers. Mr. Wakefield having to visit a patient in Manchester Street, Gray's Inn Lane, drove there with Mr. Lane, who, to pass away the time occupied by his brother-in-law with the sick person, entered the Horse Bazaar, contiguous to the above place. He was not long there when a crash was heard immediately over the auctioneer's stand, and presently poor THEODORE was seen tumbling through a skylight in the roof of a portico (about thirteen feet from the ground), which stands in the betting room, and his head coming in contact with

the flagging beneath, he was killed on the spot. The back part of his head was smashed to atoms, and his brains flew about in all directions. Mr. Lane not being at the appointed spot to meet Mr. Wakefield, induced the latter gentleman, after waiting some time, to enter the yard of the Bazaar to look for him, but, upon Mr. W. being recognised as a surgeon, he was told that an accident had occurred to a person, and his assistance was required. On Mr. Wakefield looking at the melancholy object before him, who was so disfigured by the fall, that no traces were left to recognise Theodore, but when the horrid truth burst upon him—by the pencil being taken out of his pockets—and on opening the card-case, the name of Lane appearing on it, Mr. W. sunk beneath it, and lay in a fainting fit, with scarcely any signs of life for nearly an hour. The mutilated body was in the mean time conveyed to an adjoining public-house. The sad occurrence is supposed to have arisen from Mr. Lane having struck his head against the rim of the skylight, while drawing it from the window of the betting-room, and being thus thrown off his centre, fell backwards in the way stated. Information of the circumstance was sent off immediately to the party at Mill Hill, whose consternation can be better felt than described. The distraction of Mrs. Lane on being made acquainted with the death of her husband was of the most agonizing description. An inquest was held on the body, when the jury censured the manner in which the skylight was left exposed, it being merely surrounded by a ledge about six inches above the flooring. A verdict of “accidental death” was returned.

The *Times* newspaper, a few days after the death of Mr. Lane, thus aroused the attention of the public:—“Our readers cannot have forgotten the dreadful calamity which occurred a few days ago to a young artist of great promise, of the name of LANE, who fell through a skylight, and was killed on the spot. He has left a

widow and two small children in very poor circumstances. The genuine merit of the artist, and the destitute condition of his bereaved family, have excited more than common interest; and an English feeling is not accustomed to evaporate in mere language. A plan for a subscription has been suggested by some benevolent gentlemen who have no knowledge of the unfortunate deceased, except through his professional works. The subscription is yet in its infancy; but we are happy to learn that Sir Thomas Lawrence has benevolently put his eminent name at the head of the list, with a donation of five guineas; and that Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, who is a constant friend of the arts, has kindly contributed a similar donation. Two brother artists, Mr. J. B. Lane, the painter of the picture of Joseph;—and Mr. Leahy, the painter of Mary Stuart's Farewell to France, have also put down the same sum. The beginning is small; but what begins under such auspices, will, we doubt not, terminate in a handsome relief to such portion of the widowed family's loss, as money can relieve."

Mr. T. Lupton, the eminent mezzotinto engraver (to his credit be it said, became acquainted with poor Lane, through the admiration of his talents), was very zealous in the behalf of Mrs. Lane and her children, and warmly supported by Mr. Cooper, the celebrated animal painter, and under whose friendly auspices, the following advertisement appeared in the newspapers.

#### "MELANCHOLY CASE.

"**MR. THEODORE LANE**, a young and highly promising Artist, who lately fell through the Skylight, at the Gray's Inn Road Horse Repository, and was killed upon the spot, having left a **WIDOW** and **TWO INFANT CHILDREN** without that Provision which a longer life of talent and industry might reasonably have been expected to procure for them—it is hoped the Friends of growing

Talent and the Arts will Contribute to Relieve the destitute state of the Widow and Orphans who have been so instantaneously and awfully deprived of their earthly source of comfort and support.

“ Subscriptions will be received at Messrs. Morland and Co.’s, Pall Mall; Messrs. Ransom and Co.’s, Pall Mall, East; Messrs. Coutts’s, Strand; Messrs. Colnaghi and Co.’s, Pall Mall, East; Mr. Colnaghi’s, Cockspur Street; Mr. Ackermann’s, Strand; Mr. Dobbs’s, printseller, Soho Square; Mr. Arnold’s, bookseller, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden; and Mr. Clay’s, printseller, Ludgate Street.”

The Right Hon. Lord Egremont, five pounds.—Right Hon. V. Fitzgerald, five pounds.—Sir Thomas Lawrence, P. R. A., five pounds.—F. Chantrey, R. A., ten pounds.—E. D. Leahy, Esq.—N. Robertson, Esq.—George Westmacott, Esq., and several other persons. The subscriptions, however, were soon closed by the relatives of Mrs. Lane, who were averse to the thing altogether. Mrs. Carne, sister of Mr. Lane (and the wife of a literary gentleman, whose publication of “ Letters from the East,” have reached the third edition), adopted one of the children as her own. It is worthy of remark, Sir THOMAS LAWRENCE, the late much lamented president of the Royal Academy—with that urbanity of disposition which always characterised his conduct, contributed in an instant, five pounds, observing at the same time to Mr. Lupton, who made the application to Sir Thomas—“ You are at liberty to make use of my name, as an admirer of talent, in any way you think proper. I am extremely anxious to promote the subscription\* for the benefit of Mr. Lane’s widow and children.”

\* So great was the philanthropy of the late Sir Thomas Lawrence, that it is well known that he contributed largely to the distresses of other persons, during the same time he has been annoyed with two or three *executions* in his own house.

As a proof of the extraordinary merit of Mr. Lane as an artist, it is worthy of remark, that the first picture he exhibited for the approbation of the public, "An hour before the Duel," he sold for forty pounds. Such instances of talent, or good fortune, we believe, are very rarely to be met with by young artists; but, in fact, he was equally fortunate with most of his other paintings. Indeed, another of his subjects proved so highly attractive, that it was noticed by an eminent artist at the private view of the Royal Academy, and a great sum of money was offered for it before the public exhibition took place at Somerset House.

The remains of poor THEODORE were most respectfully interred, by his relatives, in the burial ground of Old St. Pancras Church, on the 28th of May, 1828. No monumental stone has been erected to his memory, perhaps under the idea that "Praises on tombs are trifles vainly spent!" or, according to the poet:—

ALEXANDER and CÆSAR have vanish'd away,  
And PLATO and CICERO now are but clay;  
The brave, and the learned, and the good, and the wise,  
All come to the same simple close of—

" HERE LIES."

FINIS.

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